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C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 000227

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [NO](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT STATE SECRETARY

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Classified By: Pol/Econ Counselor Mike Hammer for reasons 1.4 b and d

1. (SBU) The Ambassador paid an introductory call on Norwegian Development Ministry State Secretary Anne Stenhammer on February 27. Stenhammer elaborated on Norway's plans to direct foreign aid to areas where Norway has unique expertise: oil and energy development, peace and reconciliation, gender equality promotion, and environmental resource management.

NORWAY AS ENERGY ROLE MODEL

2. (C) Norway is a model country for effective and proper management of its petroleum resources and has plans to share this expertise with energy rich developing countries. According to Stenhammer, Norway plans to combine production technology, petroleum fund development, anti-corruption, and environmental extraction into a country specific programs. Stenhammer envisioned trial programs in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Bolivia and Colombia have expressed interest in the program. Over the long term, Norway has an interest in working with China on resource management issues. She expressed interest in cooperating with the USG on programs for resource rich developing nations. Post would appreciate Washington's views on such cooperation. NOTE: Norway has allocated NOK 50 million (about USD 7.5 million) over the next five years for an energy sector management assistance initiative. A working group with MFA, Petroleum Ministry and Finance Ministry representatives has been formed to oversee the program. END NOTE

3. (SBU) Norway has already launched an oil sector management assistance program for Iraq. The Development Ministry has allocated NOK 27 million (about USD 4 million) for a three-year assistance program focused on four areas: data collection and management, management training, strategies to enhance oil recovery, and developing national competence. The Iraq assistance program is separate from the developing countries assistance program Stenhammer described.

CONTINUING WORK IN TROUBLE SPOTS, INTEREST IN PALESTINIAN AREAS

4. (C) Stenhammer stated that Norway has a responsibility to continue working in areas where it already has a presence like Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan. Norway will work to balance foreign development and political goals and will not weigh in on a situation where its assistance is not wanted. Regarding Palestinians, Stenhammer seemed interested in engagement but was cautious saying that Norwegians would wait until the situation settles.

5. (C) COMMENT: This was our first meeting with State Secretary Stenhammer, who like Development Minister Solheim,

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is from the Socialist Left (SV) party. Like the Minister, Stenhammer is interested in working with the United States where possible. She was engaging and clearly outlined Norway's plans to assist resource rich developing countries, promoting rights of women, and AIDS programs. END COMMENT
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